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Housekeepers' Chat

Friday, February 21, 1930

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "In Honor of George Washington." Menu and recipes from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Publications available: "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes" and "Cooking Beef According To The Cut."

Since tomorrow is the birthday anniversary of George Washington, I think it would be quite appropriate to have a special dinner -- such a dinner as might have been served at Mount Vernon.

Have you ever been to Mount Vernon? Mount Vernon, the home of George and Martha Washington, is one of the most beautiful of America's historic spots. It is not far from Washington, D. C. Most any day, summer or winter, hundreds of people visit this historic shrine.

Last summer I took Aunt Jane to Mount Vernon. Aunt Jane is a spry little old lady, in spite of her eighty-odd years and how thrilled she was! For a long time, she sat in one of the comfortable chairs, on the broad veranda, from which one can look out over the beautiful Potomac.

When she had "filled her soul with beauty," as she expressed it, I took Aunt Jane through the old mansion -- upstairs, where she might see the quaint bedrooms. Then we went out to the kitchen, which of course is detached from the main building. There was the fireplace, and on one side of the room, the big copper kettles in which the servants cooked many a meal for George and Martha and their guests.

We looked into the well-house, and the old wash-house, the carriage house and the barn. "For the land sakes!" said Aunt Jane, when she saw the old family coach. "Do you mean to tell me that George Washington rode in that contraption?" I assured her that he did.

Then we visited the garden house, the weaving house, and the relic house. I could hardly get Aunt Jane to leave the relic house.

She was particularly interested in General Washington's wearing apparel -- his suit, his long black stockings, his big umbrella, and his watch. "I must remember all I can," said Aunt Jane, "to tell the folks back home."

Before we left, we walked through the garden, and past the neat box hedges.

But this will never do! I am supposed to be broadcasting a menu -- not the beauties of Mount Vernon. Let's get our pencils, and write our menu.

What do you suppose George and Martha might have had for dinner, on a day in February? Roast Beef, perhaps, or "a hot joint," as George would have

called it. Yorkshire Pudding, too, might have been included in their bill of fare. Roast Beef; Yorkshire Pudding; Scalloped Potatoes; Turnip Greens or some other "pot herb;" Hot Hoe Cakes, straight from the griddle; Pickled Cherries; and Plum Pudding with Hard Sauce.

The Plum Pudding, we'll pretend, was the last of the Christmas plum pudding, made by the recipe, or "receipt," brought over from England.

Do you suppose that a meal, something like this, might have been cooked at Mount Vernon, at the big fireplace?

Martha's servants cooked the "hot joint" on a spit, but that is not the method I'm going to suggest to you.

If you'll take your pencils now, I'll give you the modern version of "a hot joint," in other words, a Rib Roast of Beef, cooked in the latest style.

The first thing to do is to select a two or three rib standing roast. Wipe it off with a damp cloth. Then rub it with salt, pepper, and flour. Place the roast, fat side up, in an open pan, without water. As the fat melts and cooks out, it will baste the meat.

Make a small "t" cut through the fat covering, and insert a meat thermometer so that the bulb of the thermometer reaches the center of the roast. Place the meat in a hot oven -- about 500 degrees F. Sear the meat, for 20 to 30 minutes, until it is lightly browned, then reduce the oven temperature to about 300 degrees. Continue cooking until the thermometer in the meat reads about 140 degrees for a rare roast, 160 for a medium, or 180 for a well-done roast.

A rib roast will probably require 16 minutes to the pound to be rare, 22 minutes to the pound to be medium, and about 30 minutes to the pound to be well done. Higher oven temperature than 300 degrees will shorten the time of cooking; but it will increase the shrinkage of the roast, and both meat and drippings may become too brown. Reducing the oven temperature to 250 degrees will decrease the shrinkage markedly, and will cook the meat uniformly, but longer time will be required.

When a rib roast will not stand upright, lay it on a rack in an open pan without water, and insert the meat thermometer directly into the center of the lean meat, not through the fat covering, as in the standing roast. Baste occasionally during cooking, to prevent drying out.

Serve the roast on a hot platter, surrounded by browned potatoes, or by squares of Yorkshire pudding.

Would you like to have my recipe for Yorkshire Pudding? You will need the following ingredients:

1 cup milk,	1/2 cup flour, and
2 eggs,	1/2 teaspoon salt.

Four ingredients, for Yorkshire Pudding: (Repeat).

Beat these four ingredients together, thoroughly, until they make a smooth batter. Pour this batter into the hot roasting pan, containing about 1/4 cup of the beef drippings. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, in a moderately hot oven, about 400 degrees F. Cut in squares, and serve at once, with the roast.

If you did not get these recipes, perhaps you'd like to send for a copy of the leaflet from which I read them. "Cooking Beef According to the Cut" is the name of this attractive leaflet, which gives practical directions for cooking all the different cuts of beef. If you are interested in learning about pork and lamb, as well as beef, I suggest that you also send for "Pork in Preferred Ways," and "Lamb As You Like It."

Now let's assemble our menu again: Rib Roast of Beef; Yorkshire Pudding; Scalloped Parsnips; Turnip Greens; or some other pot herb; Hot Hoe Cakes; Pickled Cherries; and Plum Pudding with Hard Sauce.

I hope you have some Pickled Cherries in your fruit cupboard. They would go nicely with this dinner. Just supposing that Martha Washington served Pickled Cherries, to George, on his birthday anniversary. Can't you imagine General Washington saying, somewhat testily, to Martha, "Must you always remind me of that cherry tree incident?"

Monday: "Hot Soup for a Cold Day."

10/10/18

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you regarding the matter of the...

I have been thinking about the situation for some time...

I am sure that you will understand my position...

I am looking forward to hearing from you soon...

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]